R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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SOME THOUGHTS ON THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE 1975-85 PERIOD.

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APPROXIMATELY 80 AMERICAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND SPECIALISTS OFFERED THEIR OPINIONS AND PREDICTIONS OF WHAT THE STATE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING WOULD BE LIKE IN THE COLLEGES IN THE 1975 TO 1985 PERIOD, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF THE ELEMENTARY AND INTERMEDIATE LEVELS, THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY AND ELECTRONICS, AND THE TEACHER. THEY AGREED THAT THE INCOMING COLLEGE FRESHMAN, WITH A BACKGROUND OF 4 TO 6 YEARS IN ONE FOREIGN LANGUAGE, WILL ENTER UPON THE STUDY OF A SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE AIDED BY A LIVE TEACHER, APPLIED LINGUISTICS, AUDIOLINGUAL TEXTS, AND AN INDIVIDUALIZED, PROGRAMED, SELF-INSTRUCTION, SELF-LEARNING SERIES. HOWEVER, HE MAY INSTEAD CONTINUE WITH THE SAME LANGUAGE IN AN ADVANCED CONVERSATION, COMPOSITION, LITERATURE, AND CIVILIZATION PROGRAM, WITH A SOCIOLOGICAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH COMPETING WITH AESTHETIC-CENTERED LITERATURE COURSES. IN THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY, EACH BOOTH WITH A CENTRALIZED AUDIO-LINGUAL-VISUAL COLOR RECEIVER WILL BE AIDED BY COMPUTERIZED DEVICES, LIGHT SCOPES, DIAL SYSTEMS, POCKET-SIZED TV SETS, BATTERY TAPE RECORDERS, AND FILM. THE LANGUAGE AND RESIDENCE HOUSES ON CAMPUS WILL HAVE CLOSED CIRCUIT BROADCASTING. THE TEACHER HIMSELF, KNOWLEDGEABLE NOT ONLY IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE BUT ALSO IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS, WILL GENERATE PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND SYSTEMS COMMENSURATE WITH ADVANCES IN THE WORLD OF ELECTRONICS. (AUTHOR)

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Some Thoughts on the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages in the 1975-85 Period.

By Mulligan, John J.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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28

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

VILLANOVA, PENNSYLVANIA

10 December 1966

Dear Colleague:

Last summer while on a special assignment with the Long Range Study Panel, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Va., I contacted you with reference to the topic upon which I was working at the time: Foreign Languages in the United States Marine Corps - 1985. I asked specific questions about your own interpretations of and predictions for our language world in the 1975-85 period: the elementary level, the intermediate level, the language laboratory and electronics area, and the teacher himself. You responded immediately and graciously. Several of you could not respond at the time since you were in Europe or engaged in some project here.

The enclosures serve a two-fold purpose: (1) to express to you my gratitude; and (2) to express the hope that the compilations/summaries which I have made through and with you constitute a contribution to knowledge.

Pages 1 and 2 of the enclosures contain summary statements which I made of: (A) the most frequently noted observations for the elementary and the intermediate levels in the 1975-85 period; it admits of a distinction between "second foreign language", i.e., a language studied in college different from that studied in high school and/or grade school, and "same foreign language", i.e., a continuation of that language studied in high school and/or grade school; (B) the most frequently expressed thoughts/convictions relative to the world of the language laboratory and electronics in the 1975-85 time frame; (C) your expressions and predictions about the teacher within the same 1975-85 period.

Pages 3, 4, 5 and 6 contain selected, individual, direct quotations from the letters. I attempted to avoid all the pitfalls of the isolated, out-of-context quote. In some instances clarifying words are set within parentheses in the quote in the interests of the writer's intent. The quotes are headed: Elementary-Intermediate, Language Laboratory-Electronics, Teacher, General. The quotations were selected for their representative and/or provocative contribution.

My larger study for the Long Range Study Panel (itself a preliminary phase of a further study by me) would be yet incomplete if it did not reflect the substance of the following pages, my report to you. Again, my gratitude.

Sincerely,

John J. Mulligan

John J. Mulligan
Professor

JJM:jks

A. Elementary - Intermediate Levels

In the 1975-85 period the elementary-intermediate second (foreign) language college student will be initiating a second FL experience in consonance with his own wishes. With a background of four-to-six years of study in his first foreign language the incoming college Freshman will enter upon his second language aided by a live teacher, applied linguistics, audio-lingual texts and an individualized, programmed, self-instruction, self-learning series- with or without credit on the elementary level. Ease of inter-continental travel and an A - L - V language learning center will motivate and benefit him to a degree hardly comprehensible in 1966.

In the 1975-85 period the elementary-intermediate same (foreign) language college student will embark - with the aid of a live teacher - upon an advanced conversation, composition, literature and "civilization" program. In a number of instances, however, there will prevail a sociological-anthropological approach which will compete strongly with aesthetic-centered literature courses.

In BOTH of the above areas different kinds of classes will be established and implemented for incoming Freshmen.

B. Language Laboratory - Electronics

In the 1975-85 period a centralized A-L-V color receiver in each booth will aid and motivate the student in the second language and the student in the same language. Computerized devices, light scopes, dial systems, program retrieval, and contrastive analysis studies will be acceptable and ordinary. Pocket-sized T.V. sets; cartridge-loaded, battery-operated portable tape recorders, and/or a combination of the latter and film - continuous or strip, will make language learning a campus-wide experience and adventure.

The FL House on the campus, and, indeed, most of the residence halls, will, through a dial system, closed circuit TV and radio broadcasting programs of 14-16 hours daily, be the significant centers of academic/social activities and foreign language orientation.

Satellite communication will produce instantaneous and extensive contacts.

C. The Teacher

The foreign language teacher will have added a third "l" to his language and literature capabilities: linguistics, specifically applied linguistics. He will not teach it necessarily but he will use it to make foreign language learning more natural, more comprehensive, more palatable. Such "Wegbereiter" as Chomsky, Moulton, Lado, Politzer and their contemporaries/successors of equal note the teacher will know thoroughly. Familiar with the successful assertions of the world of electronics the teacher will continuously discharge his own responsibilities in generating commensurable, pedagogical principles and systems.

QUOTATIONS

Elementary-Intermediate

"The quality of elementary and high school teaching could be too varied to permit only one kind of class being set up for incoming Freshmen."

"The trend in some institutions already is to offer less and less elementary language work as their advanced classes build up on the better preparation of high school students."

"We will return to a more practical and conservative method, a synthesis between the one presently employed and the old-fashioned grammar method."

"Elementary language classes will be available only as second FL experiences"

Most high school students can count on 4, if not 6, year sequences."

"Colleges and universities will continue to give elementary language courses simply because a student may wish to study a language different from the one he studied in secondary."

"If there should continue to be elementary languages taught at the college level, it will be with more of a linguistic orientation, using linguistic principles and individualized programmed learning.

"There seems to be a growing trend toward taking a second foreign language in college."

"The colleges will still need to give elementary instruction - - the student who comes to college with a six-year sequence in Spanish behind him will decide that he now needs to learn French, etc.."

" - - for many students reading and writing skills are more germane to their interests and careers than audiolingual skills, Bloomfield notwithstanding."

"In the college-university complex language departments should (i.e., will) be presenting courses in "civilization", and interdisciplinary courses should(will) have appeared in greater frequency where the foreign language is a means rather than an end."

" - - the elementary and intermediate levels will be devoted to conversation, composition and literature."

"The colleges will devote themselves in the first and second year (Western language) courses to the teaching of the culture's heritage, with a sociological-anthropological approach gaining the upper hand over esthetics-centered literature courses."

"The vision of mass foreign language competence will have faded badly and more attainable objectives such as a reading competence (greater I hope than is now the case) will be striven for.

QUOTATIONS (continued)

Language Laboratory-Electronics

"Materials and techniques will catch up to the great strides already made in the fields of electronics and science."

"A machine that will combine tape recorder and film - strip or continuous. - - - . What the student would see on the film strip would make him react in any number of ways, his reactions would then be corrected."

"He(the student) will dial the language center from his room for programs to see and hear!"

"One dormitory building will be the FL house, the center of many extra- and co-curricular activities. This building will contain a small language laboratory and its own library."

"At least one section of the lab will contain a combination of A-L with visual, probably via closed-circuit television, with small, private receivers."

"The concept must precede the language: the centralized A-V color receiver in each lab booth must be envisioned as an eventual reality."

"To a large degree they(language laboratories) are already being displaced by study abroad programs, a much more effective "lab"."

"Audio-lingual texts, coordinated with tape recordings, and use of a native speaker."

"Pocket-sized TV sets will play some part in language learning."

"Automatic program retrieval with dial system, installation of closed circuit TV and radio broadcasting center; broadcasting duration of 14 hours daily."

"Lane's SAID system in which a student's oral response is evaluated electro-mechanically and feedback information (is) shown to the student - - - should be able to handle segmented phonemic features in addition to the super-segmented characteristics of pitch, loudness, and tempo which the computerized system can already accomodate."

"The use of computerized devices, including light scopes, will not replace current language laboratories. They will merely increase their usefulness."

"Programmed tape recordings, accompanied by a printed manual."

The Teacher

"It will have been discovered that students who try to learn a foreign language using only programmed tape recordings, without the guidance of a live teacher, soon give up in frustration."

QUOTATIONS (continued)

The Teacher (cont'd)

"Teachers may expect to become less of a human drilling machine (on the two levels) and take on more creative, stimulating and impromptu classroom behavior."

"The language teacher of the future is being better prepared to teach an aural-oral method which will avoid the extremes of audio-lingualism and grammar translation."

"There will be many more opportunities for foreign language teachers in our schools and colleges. One or more foreign languages will be required quite generally for college graduation, for specialized military service, for foreign service of many kinds, for many assignments in business and industry and for many professional and semi-professional occupations in our own country."

"I am afraid that the pitifully meagre salaries paid to elementary and high school teachers in many areas combined with the increasing shortage of teachers might result in a development which would induce elementary and high schools to hire even larger numbers of incompetent teachers."

" - - the next ten or fifteen years will see the development of a great many contrastive analysis studies comparing the native language of our people, English, with the structure of other languages such as French, German, Italian, and even, of course, Vietnamese and the like.

"Training in Applied Linguistics will greatly facilitate adults' subsequent acquisition of one or more foreign languages."

"Much remains to be done in the area of linguistic theory and learning theory and its application to the teaching of languages on the elementary levels."

"The teacher will have to have a knowledte of linguistics since the textbooks will be geared to this type of approach."

General

"It may not be too much to hope that there will be a considerable increase in the number of courses (i.e., in other disciplines) that are given in the foreign languages."

"Greater concentration in the student's major his last year (or two), so that an FL major will be taking only language courses and probably living in a "language house"."

"Ease of intercontinental travel will permit greater exchange of students."

" - - strongly computerized, mechanized and helped immeasurably by vastly increased and facilitated travel."

QUOTATIONS (continued)

General (cont'd)

"Russian and Chinese will clearly be dominant (rare or exotic) languages; although Hindi, Urdu, Swahili, etc. will be taught increasingly."

"Various branches of the military and the federal government will be providing the major impetus and the financial support for developments."

"We will muddle along with our elementary and intermediate courses on the college level - just a "requirement" which the student has to meet without deriving from it any lasting practical benefit - with the same unsatisfactory results. If, however, a confrontation with some outside power should force us (and I mean the whole nation) to change our lackadaisical attitude toward foreign language learning (as the launching of the sputnik in 1957 aroused us from our self-complacent attitude in technology), the situation might change, though I do not think this will happen."

"The psychological and pedagogical dangers of mechanized impersonality will have been defined constituting a more accurate guide in this matter than our varying instincts."

"If a fraction of the enthusiasm and ingenuity which is devoted to the construction of highways or cars were to go into language learning, this country would rank among the most proficient in language skills."

"The language problem will have to be solved on a world-wide basis before any progress of any real value can be made locally (and by locally I mean USA as a whole)."

"What remains essential is a solid grasp of a foreign culture through readings of literary texts, through oral and written expressions in the foreign tongue."

"The need will become painfully apparent to develop our own national resources. Leaning on foreign national will never do."

"Some college administrations and faculties will try to have students meet the (language) requirement before coming to college and be excused from any more advanced work. This will be the danger."

"A great need for American citizens fluent in foreign languages."

"The possibility of doing direct translation (automatic translation devices) already exists. In this case the computer is used much the same way one would use a foreign language dictionary. The more difficult problem arises when one attempts to design a machine capable of understanding the spoken word. Once we learn the means by which a machine can recognize the spoken word, the translation becomes easy; a translation memory could be inserted between the speech recognizer and the speech synthesizer to do the literal translation."

"In all events I hope that the relationship of student and teacher will always remain in its simplest form"

California

Toews - State Jr. College Coordinator
Axelrod - S.C. at San Francisco
Wolf - S.C. at San Diego
Lawson - S.C. at San Diego
von Hofe - U.S.C.
Cord - S.C. at Sonoma
Laser - S.C., Dominguez Hills
Vidal - S.C. at Hayward

Connecticut

Bieber - Connectucut C.
Kahn - Central Conn. S.C.

Illinois

McCluney - U. of Illinois
Goedsche - Northwestern U.

Iowa

Fehling - S.U. of Iowa

Kentucky

Peak - Eastern Kentucky S.U.

Louisiana

Schroeder - Louisiana S. U.

Maryland

Corrin - Goucher C.
Jantz - Johns Hopkins U.

Massachusetts

Bottiglia - Mass. Inst. Tech.
Locke - Mass. Inst. Tech.
Campbell - Roxbury Latin School
Lowe - C. of the Holy Cross
Heller - U. of Mass.

Michigan

Lane - U. of Michigan
Zale - U. of Michigan
Owens - Eastern M.U.
Radimersky - Michigan S.U.
Trojanowicz - Michigan S.U.

Minnesota

Wood - U. of Minnesota

New Jersey

Sullivan - Princeton U.
Moulton - Princeton U.
Cook - Sarnoff Research Center, Princeton

New Mexico

Kolbert - U. of N.M.

New York

Benoit - Cornell U.
Browning - Hamilton C.
Waas - Colgate U.
Mildenberger - MLA
Churchill - Hofstra U.
Wolff - Mamaroneck High School
Walsh - N.E. Conference on Teaching of F.L.
Minor - S.U. College, Fredonia
Rie - S.U. College, Fredonia

Ohio

Pimsleur - Ohio S.U.
Stern - U. of Cincinnatti
Reichard - Oberlin C.
Krauss - Ohio U.
Bourgeois - Xavier U.

Oklahoma

Poston - U. of Oklahoma

Pennsylvania

Krispyn, U. of Penna.
Frescoln - Villanova U.
Bauer - Bloomsburg S.C.
Streeter - Lafayette C.
Valkelis - Lafayette C.
Kadler - Lycoming C.
Wegener - Muhlenberg C.
Pillwein - St. Joseph's C.
Rice - Ursinus C.
Perkins - Swarthmore C.
Schweitzer - Bryn Mawr C.
Edberg - Temple U.
Pfeffer - U. of Pittsburgh
Rupp - Millersville S.C.
McDonough - Community C. of Phila.
von Gronicka - U. of Penna.
Cimini - U. of Scranton
Belasco - Penna. S.U.

Rhode Island

Twaddell - Brown U.

Texas

Lehmann - U. of Texas
Hill - U. of Texas
Michael - U. of Texas

Virginia

Vaughan - Long Range Study Panel, MCS, Quantico
Grier - Language Branch, MCEC, MCS, Quantico

Washington

Baumgaertel - U. of Washington

Washington, D.C.

Fiks - George Washington U.
Burkhart - The American U.
Pelphrey and Burke - International Business Machines Corp.
Chaney - Defense Language Inst.
Hutchinson - Defense Language Institute
Patee - RCA, Electronic Data Processing

Wisconsin

Roeming - U. of Wisconsin